



Church Unity Intercession

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EMMANUEL

STOR

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AND
INTERCESSION

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London :
EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE
7, Adam Street, Strand
1912

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PREFACE.

It has been remarked that "the most noble and glorious privilege that God has accorded to man is the duty and privilege of Intercession." If the problem of Unity is ever solved on earth it must be largely in connection with the giving to Prayer and Intercession their right place in the Church and among the Churches.

The Evangelical Alliance has been privileged for the long period of sixty-six years to issue to the Churches the annual Call to Intercession represented by the Universal Week of Prayer. The movement has grown to be co-extensive with the Christian world, and during the first complete week of each new year the Programme, translated into many languages and dialects, guides the devotions of all Nations.

The addresses contained in this volume were given at the Central London Meetings, held at the King's Hall (Holborn Restaurant). They were delivered in the atmosphere of unity and love, and in the felt presence and power of God the Holy Spirit. It is in prayer meetings of this nature that the Church will find the power to meet the social difficulties of the day, and to effectually minister to the spiritual needs of mankind. May their number and influence be greatly multiplied.

THE CHURCH'S NEED—
A VISION OF GOD.

CHURCH UNITY AND INTERCESSION.

THE CHURCH'S NEED—A VISION OF GOD.

By the Rev. CHARLES BROWN, D.D.

(Minister of Ferme Park Baptist Church).

“**I**N the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I

*am undone ; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips : for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar : and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips ; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us ? Then said I, Here am I ; send me. And he said, Go.”—*Isa. vi.

It seems to me that that passage is appropriate in great part to our circumstance this morning. Let it be settled in our minds—it is settled, of course, that it is absolutely and strictly historical—that this thing happened ; that this depressed youth went into the temple of God, and looking back on his experience he remembered exactly when the vision came to him. It was “ in the year that King Uzziah died.” The king had tragically died. He was fifty-two years

king in Jerusalem, and his was a great and memorable reign. "His name spread far abroad; for he was marvelously helped, till he was strong. But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he transgressed against the Lord his God, and went into the temple of the Lord to burn incense upon the altar of incense"; and there God stamped upon him the brand of His displeasure. He did not need by force to be ejected from the house; "he hastened to go out, because the Lord had smitten him with leprosy, and he was a leper unto the day of his death." And it was in the year that King Uzziah died that "I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up,, and his train filled the temple."

First of all, let this be said: that if that really happened once, and it did, and more than once—I mean a vision such as that—it may happen again, and there is no reason why it should not happen this morning. And the point of contact of this narrative with us, in my judgment, is this: that what the Church wants to-

day more than anything else is this vision of God, the recovery of what I may almost call a lost consciousness of God. You cannot begin with the country; you must begin with the Church, "judgment must begin at the house of God."

Another point of contact between this narrative and ourselves is this: that the sin for which the king had been smitten, and which the nation had shared with him, was one of the sins very common to-day, the sin of pride and self-sufficiency. Presumptuous sin was the sin of Uzziah, and, according to Isaiah the prophet, the people who were trampling the courts of the Lord's house without reverence shared the presumption of the king, and their presumption was not even cured by his tragic death. My point is this: that the recovery of the consciousness of God in the heart of the Church would, to begin with, bring back reverence into the heart of the Church.

I need not appeal to you this morning that the great lack in our people to-day is the lack of reverence. They have no

reverence for the Lord's Day, it is being filched away from us. Unless we are exceedingly watchful it will be snatched from us by self-interested men. Unless we are on the watch-tower guarding that precious national inheritance, it will be taken from us. Things are happening with regard to the Day of Rest that would have perfectly shocked our fathers, and we must stand up as a Church in a Christian nation to guard this great national asset in our life.

Reverence for the ordinances of religion, and for authority, is lacking in the home and in our social life ; reverence for old age is lacking, reverence for goodness is lacking. "Keep back Thy servant from presumptuous sins," may well be our prayer. The recovery of the consciousness of God would be the bringing back of reverence into our worship. With what reverence I would preach, with what lowliness of mind ; with what reverence my people would pray, with what reverence they would go to their Sunday School work, accounting their task sacred, holy, beautiful ; with what

reverence we would go and live in the midst of our fellow-men. Pray for the consciousness of God to come back to the Church; wait for it, believe that the vision may come, that it is possible.

You know too well, and I know it, that it is possible for a minister to stand up in the midst of a visionless congregation. It is possible for a minister to be visionless himself, to be talking about the things of God with no consciousness of God in his heart. There is needed to-day, more than anything else, in my judgment, the recovery of the consciousness of God in the midst of the Church; because wherever that comes one or two things come. Always this—what Isaiah saw—the almost blinding, august majesty of God. There is what people have lost to some extent. I think that some people's conception of our Lord is altogether unworthy; it lacks the dignity, the augustness, the sovereignty that ring throughout the New Testament. "Art thou a king, then?" was a sceptical question asked of Him. His answer is, "Thou sayest that I am." There are

no words like these in all the annals of human speech, and they fell from the lips of the risen Christ. "All authority is given to me in heaven and on earth." The conception of our Lord which St. Paul continually cherished was that of One at whose name every knee should bow, and before whose judgment-throne every man should be made manifest. The Son of Man is to come in His glory. He is not merely the "Gentle Jesus, meek and mild," of Wesley's children's hymn, not merely the Jesus who "knocks" at the door; but He is also the One who goes forth on His "white horse," "conquering and to conquer," with "His vesture dipped in blood," "and He hath on His vesture and on His thigh the name written, KING OF KINGS and LORD OF LORDS." I plead this morning for a more august conception of the sovereignty of Jesus Christ. Do not lose the consciousness of His sovereignty in your thought of His gentleness and His mercy.

Wherever the consciousness of God is—mark you—another thing will happen,

according to this vision. There will always be a consciousness of sin. The lost sense of sin will come back when the lost sense of God is recovered. "Woe is me ! for I am undone ; because I am a man of unclean lips." The silly vanity of humanity to-day is all due to this oblivion of God. The conceit of this generation is due, in the root of it, to lack of faith. Where God is manifest human defect is manifest.

If I were to deal particularly with this vision I should notice the appropriateness of Isaiah's confession. The king had died of leprosy. You know the Levitical law concerning the leper. He had to go with his head bare, his clothes rent, with a covering on his upper lip, and he had to cry "Unclean !" The sin of the king was the sin of the people ; it was the sin of presumption and irreverence, and the prophet confessed it in his cry, "I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." You have made your confession of sin this morning ; you have confessed it, and felt it as you confessed it. Re-

member, then, that as swift as thought, on the very heels of the confession comes the expiation. You may banish for ever—it ought not to have come into the Church—the thought of the necessity of purging fires in order that men may be made clean. One touch from a part of God's altar of sacrifice, and the transgression of the man falls away from him like an unclean robe, and by the touch of God he is made fit to dwell in His holy presence.

The other thing that I want to bring to you out of this narrative this morning is this: that wherever God's presence becomes manifest in the Church, in the human heart, this becomes manifest—that God has need of man. Isaiah realises, as you know, that he is not an awed spectator of this revelation and fact. He is among the beings who surround the throne; he is conscious that God is speaking, and pleading, and appealing. I was going to use the term, he is conscious of the perplexity of God. "Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?" God's appeal is not to those veiled and

mysterious beings round about the throne, but God's appeal is to him ; which means this : that God wants the human voice, human hands, a human soul, to go into the midst of this irreverence, this self-indulgence, this grinding of the poor, this increasing luxury in Jerusalem—a man who will go and bear his witness. “ I sought for a man among them, that should make up the edge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it.” God's quest has always been for men. I suppose Isaiah knew what that involved ; he knew the condition of things, and if he did not know, this vision made it plain to him. It meant that he had to go into the midst of Jerusalem and bear his witness, and become the best-hated man in Jerusalem ; it meant that his voice was to be lifted up against the luxury and self-indulgence of his time. The over-dressed women—read Isa. iii., read what is said about their loading themselves with jewels while people are rotting in their poverty, and about the grinding of the faces of the poor. It meant that he had

to go and be a speckled bird in the midst of his people and to be accused of the lack of patriotism. And it meant that he had to go and do the hardest thing that, perhaps, any man has been called upon to do—to prophesy and prophesy, and see the people growing worse and worse while he prophesied; see them growing blinder, more deaf, harder of heart; and he said, “Here am I; send me.” My plea this morning is that in the midst of all that troubles us about our national life—and I am as deeply troubled as any man—that in the midst of all these troubles God is calling us by this very need to go and bear our witness. He is calling you to live a simple, separate life, to be free of the ostentation and display of worldly people, to be content to be dubbed “narrow, puritanical, sanctimonious Sabbatarian”—great compliments. Some people’s abuse is a great deal more gratifying to me than their applause will ever be. “If the world hate you, it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of

the world, but I have chosen you out of the world; therefore the world hateth you."

Do not be too anxious to be on good terms with the world. "The servant is not greater than his Master." I think God is calling some of us to bear our witness in a certain place. You will not get the vision that Isaiah got. We will not get a dramatic vision like that. My comfort is that all men were not called to the prophetic vision in that way. There was a man guiding his plough in the furrow and watching his oxen. An old man went past him and threw his mantle upon his shoulders. That was the call of God to Elisha, and his ministry was no less illustrious than the ministry of his predecessor. By quiet ways God calls His people to witness for Him. Go and live a simple life of fidelity to God and His Gospel, and by your means, and by the means of a consecrated and separated Church, God may win the heart of this nation yet from its presumption, its conceit, its self-indulgence, its materialism, its vanity, and its sin, to become obedient to His voice and walk in the way of His commandments.

THE WORLD-WIDE CHURCH.

THE WORLD-WIDE CHURCH.

By the Rev. W. GOUDIE

(Centenary Secretary, Wesleyan Foreign Missions).

WE are to think of Christ's Church, His Church in all the world, and our prayers this mid-day must flow in thanksgiving for all that He has wrought, and in petition for the fulfilment of all that He has promised and yet purposes to do. Our prayers must ascend to Him that we may have eyes to see how great a plan He has for His Church, and how far He has proceeded already in the building of the great fabric of His Church among men and in the world.

I would recall to your minds the words that were a part of one of the great prayers of the apostle Paul (Eph. iii.),

and at the very heart of that prayer there was a desire that the people for whom he was praying might "be able to comprehend the breadth, and length, and depth and height." But the Apostle does not tell us what it is that he is measuring ; he does not tell us just because it was something that filled the whole horizon of his thought in the writing of that Epistle. This is the great Epistle of the Church, and he was thinking of the Church, and he was praying that the Ephesian Christians might know how big a thing the Church of Jesus Christ was, in the heart of God, in the purpose of the Redeemer ; as it was then actually rising, before their eyes, porches and pillars, and chapelries, away out over the Roman Empire where Paul had travelled and laboured, and as it was yet to broaden and grow until it should be a world Church. Then they would know that the purpose of the Father in the creation of man and of the world should be discovered at last to be not a workshop, not a battle-field, not a place of toil and travail and sorrow, but a place of wor-

ship, a temple, a Church. The Apostle prays that the people to whom he is writing may be able to comprehend the vastness of that Church, stretching in its length down through all the ages ; reaching in its breadth away to the far boundaries of the world ; in its depth going down to the lowest deeps to which sin has ever carried poor, ruined, human nature ; and in its height rising to the very height of the Saviour's throne, to which He lifts His redeemed in holiness, in purity, in privilege, and in fellowship. In order that they might comprehend the greatness of that Church, he also prays that they may be strengthened with might by the Spirit of God in their inner man. They needed power. He prays that Jesus Christ may dwell in their hearts by faith. He prays that they may be rooted and grounded in love, and all this in order that in the atmosphere and light of love they might have the ability to grasp the greatness of Christ's Church. We too, with something of that preparedness, I trust, are lifting our eyes this day to the greatness of Christ's

Church here on earth. As I have sat here and considered the great subject now in our minds, I thought of a picture of the greatness of that Church that God gave to me some little time ago, and that will ever live with me.

I was privileged to attend the Edinburgh Missionary Conference, and as I sat at the back of the hall and looked out upon the sea of faces there, I saw a sight, day by day, that greatly inspired all who saw it. I saw all the great nations of the earth gathered together there by representation ; I saw all the old Faiths, outworn and dying faiths of the old world represented there ; I saw all the unbelief of the world and all the heathenism of the world in all its great types represented there in the men and women who had come together to bear their witness to the saving power of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the men and women who had come together, representatives of the greatness of this Church of Jesus Christ in all the world, there were the Japanese, there were Koreans, there were Chinamen, there were Hindus, Brahmins, at one

extreme, Pariahs at the other ; there were full-blooded negroes of Africa, and there were those others, a pathetic band of negroes from South America, the sons and daughters and grandchildren of those who were bought and sold in the markets of the world, the chattels of British greed, and carried across the sea in the filthy holds of our slave-ships, and sold in the markets of South America ; but now engaged in the blessed traffic of carrying the Gospel back to the dark land from which their fathers sprang. As I looked upon those peoples representing not scattered bands of pauper Christians, but delegates from living, growing, and in many cases self-supporting churches, entering into a great world fellowship in the service of Christ, my heart rejoiced. I thought of the tides that had borne them downward, of the heathenism in which their fathers had lived so long, of the Shintuism, the Towism, the Buddhism, the Mohammedanism, the Brahminism, the fetishism and devil worship of India, the cannibalism of Africa. Then I thought of the mighty redeeming

hand of the Lord, laid upon them to lift them up and turn back the streams of their life to Himself, to gather them together and make them a people unto His name. Then I remembered the words of the Master when He said, "They shall come from the east, and the west, and the north, and the south, and shall sit down in the Kingdom of God." And lo, they were there, the first-fruits of a glorious world harvest, and a blessed witness to this fact which you are celebrating to-day: that Christ's Church is even now a world Church with a world life.

There was something more. This Church that is even now a world Church has come to realise this relation as her very vital breath—not a thing that she grows up to, but a thing that she is born to—this world church has a glorious consciousness of her life as being one life in all the world. Again I illustrate from the things one heard and saw in that wonderful World Missionary Conference. I stood there and saw those people, dark-skinned, and yellow-skinned, and lighter-

skinned, stand up to sing what we so often sing. They were singing—

“Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Doth his successive journeys run;
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.”

They were there a living verification of the faith they were singing. I think there was nothing that we sang so often as that wonderful hymn which we have just sung—

“When I survey the wondrous Cross
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.”

I looked and saw the pale face of a missionary woman home from the field only a month, and there were tears upon those cheeks, for she remembered what the Cross had been to her. I looked across the hall and saw a little Jap, and it was hard for him to sing, for the thing had laid hold of his heart too. There was a Negro woman caught in the same wondrous flame of love. And why? Because they too had laid the burden of their sin at the foot of that Cross, they had pilloved their weary head and heart upon

the same great Heart of Love. That Cross to them was not an ugly tree of shame, but the Tree of Life over all God's world. A single consciousness in this world Church of Jesus Christ ! We were there, members of many branches of the Church of Christ, and we forgot—forgot what ? We forgot that we were Anglicans, and Methodists, and Presbyterians, and Baptists, and Quakers, and the rest ; and we remembered that we were disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, and our consciousness of Him was one, deep to the very depths of our being, high to the very height of His throne.

And now, as we give thanks to God for this Church that is coming to realise her oneness, what shall we ask for her ? We have great needs, as well as great things for which to give thanks. I would name, before I sit down, one or two things which I think we ought to ask for in a great and continuous fellowship of prayer. We ought to ask for the Church that she may heal all her divisions and become one : and yet I do not think that is where to begin ; that will

come. We need something before that. We need as a Church, in our entire membership, a new vision of Jesus Christ. I speak especially of the Church in this land. I have come back again and again from the mission-field, and I have realised, as I came in contact with the Christian people of this land, that they were in a large measure losing the vision of Jesus Christ which made our fathers what they were. We need a vision of Jesus Christ in His supremacy, Jesus Christ as supreme, as ultimate, as universal; universal, ultimate, supreme, as Prophet, Priest, and King. There are so many Christian people in this land, God-fearing, but thoughtless people, members of the Church, who are not reaching the full privilege of their membership; so many who have come to say and feel that there are many paths that lead to God, and many angles and phases of Truth, and that Christianity is but one of many. We need to pray for the Church that she shall realise afresh the supremacy of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is alone and peerless, and we need to get

back that vision of Him granted to the infant Church in Jerusalem, when on the morrow of His Ascension, and when as yet He had hardly laid aside the lowly garments of His mortal life, they were ready to witness, and die if need be, for their faith that "There is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved."

We need more. Our vision of Jesus Christ must not be intellectual only. We need to be sure to understand Him better, and the mind of man will never rest from its labour to understand and measure the greatness of the Son of Man, the Elder Brother of us all. I do not plead that your minds may cease from diligence to understand the mind and greatness of the Master, but that our knowledge of Him must be of the heart as well as of the head. You do not know Him while it is only the mind that has apprehended Him. You only know Him when the heart has laid hold on Him, and your knowledge is experience. And, mark you, when we have knowledge of Jesus Christ, when the Church has knowledge

of Jesus Christ in her experience, she will give hospitality to all truth. There is no Light, and there is no truth that comes not from Him who embodies and en-spheres the whole world of truth. Hospitality to all truth ! When you know Him there is no dream of man, no knowledge of man, that can shake that experience. So long as I know Him only by the apprehension of my mind, I am an easy prey to any man whose mind is more subtle than mine ; he can fool me to the top of his bent, and it will be the grace of God in him if he does not do it. But when I know the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour, when His love has compelled my love and made me a new creature, no new knowledge can shake that experience. And the Church needs to-day to go back to a knowledge of God as an experience, to an immediacy of contact between the heart of man and the heart of his Master. That was the very essence of religion in the days of the Apostles. The infant Church had an immediacy of personal touch with the Lord Jesus, and it was just in that im-

mediacy of personal touch that she received the power to shake the world, and build a new world with Jesus Christ as its Lord. And we need, in one word, to interpret this new life in all the relationships of men—in our industrial life, in our social life, in our commercial life, in our national life, in our international relationships—until the Church of Jesus Christ as she is to-day, but quickened, renewed, uplifted, empowered, shall dictate peace to the world, and stamp upon all the life of the world the image of her Lord ; until a holy Church shall become a holy nation, and a holy nation shall become a holy world, and a holy world shall be a living, universal temple of the Lord our God.

THE STORM AND THE PILOT.

THE STORM AND THE PILOT.

By the Rev. H. ELVET LEWIS, M.A.

(Minister of King's Cross Congregational Church).

I THINK we must all of us feel deeply moved, in view of this Week of Prayer, in 1912, for, as we have been reminded continually—in the reading of the Lesson, in the hymn, and in the prayers, we are girt round with waves of unrest, and we might wonder what is to become of the Christian Church in the midst of all the tumult and the conflict and the clash. It seemed to me, therefore, a fitting question to ask, Does our Leader know about tumult and conflict. When He was here on earth, had He anything to do with storm, with troubles, with the raging of the world? The moment we turn to the story of His life we are reassured. We

find that He knew all about the conflict, and all about the tempest, and all about the wild tumult of the world.

I have been especially thinking of His voyage across the sea, when the ship was suddenly overtaken by a terrible storm. They seemed all on board expectant of death. He alone was sleeping. They came to Him in their distress. "Carest thou not that we perish?" Now it is not simply that He rose and calmed the storm, but if you follow the narrative you will find that He was being carried through the storm to His work. The task on the shore was waiting for Him. We read in the very next chapter—taking it from St. Mark's Gospel—that when He was come out of the ship, the ship that had been in the storm, the ship that had been almost overwhelmed was simply carrying Him to His work, and very difficult work. So that He was not afraid of the tumult and the peril; He was not afraid of the raging sea. He is not afraid to-day of all that is happening around us. We feel the breath of the storm, we all of us are in touch, in a

sense, with the unrest of the world. But I believe our Saviour is still in the ship that carries Him to His work. For China, for Persia, or, coming nearer home, for all the threatening conflicts here, I believe in the leadership of Jesus Christ ; I believe that in spite of all the difficulties and the lowering clouds, the ship is carrying Him to His work. And so let us not be, like the disciples, filled with too much anxiety almost to remain calm and believing, but rather let the very troubles make us more confident in Him as Ruler of the wind and waves, Ruler of all the raging of the nations and of all the unrest of the world. He is still Captain of the Ship, Head of the Church, and He is here in London at this moment to tell His people to be of good courage. What He is in London, and elsewhere in our own land, He is in Berlin, in Paris, in St. Petersburg ; and it seems to me that instead of these difficulties making us afraid, they ought to make us more earnest, more prayerful, more Christ-assured. They ought to make us more confident, for surely all these things are

going to give the Lord Jesus Christ His new opportunity in the East, as well as in the West ; on this side of the Atlantic and on the other side of the Atlantic too. If He were afraid, if we found Him at any time going back from a difficulty or a danger, then we might lose heart ; but He never did : He never shrank from any difficulty, He never turned back from any conflict. When one of His disciples stood for a moment in His way and told Him, "Have mercy upon Thyself ; this is not the road for Thee, the road of pain and peril," He turned upon His disciple and said, "Get thee behind me, Satan." And when He came to meet the last, He met it not only with prayer, but He sang a hymn even before going out into the Garden of Gethsemane, as if saying to the disciples, "The time of singing is come ; not the time of weeping or of heart breaking, but the time of singing, for the hour of the Cross has come, and the Cross means Salvation to the whole world. Let us sing." And I believe that this present time, which brings mis-giving to many people, only brings the

Saviour nearer to the Christian Church, nearer the consummation of His saving purposes. I myself believe, as we pray, that all that is going on in the world at this moment, all the uneasiness, all the misunderstanding, all the strife—this sea that seems to be in a dark and threatening tumult—is carrying the ship in which Christ is, to His work on the other side. The most difficult test met Him, as if for Him the most trying work came after the darkest night. There is no miracle in the whole of the Gospels, I think—if we may compare miracles, in dealing with bodily ailments—compared with that. “Immediately ” after the storm the ship brings Him to the hard work for which He received no thanks. But He did it, and I believe He is present in our conflict and passing to-day through all these troubles to finish His redemptive work. He has great work in China, great work in the East, great work here at home. Let us pray, without dictating to God what He is to do ; let us pray that His will may be done in the midst of all these social misunderstandings and conflicts ;

and let us take our place close to the Saviour ; and with Him we too shall find our work on the shore, and may He give us strength to do it. The ship is safe, the Church is indestructible, Christ lives : let us not fear, but pray !

PRAYER AND WORLD MISSIONS.

PRAYER AND WORLD MISSIONS.

By the Rt. Rev. BISHOP INGHAM, D.D.

(Home Secretary, Church Missionary Society).

THIS matter of prayer is one over which a great many stumble. It is likely that we who have gathered here have faced the matter out, and have learned some of the conditions of faithful and successful persevering prayer. But a large number of those whom you and I are apt to meet from time to time have, perhaps, given up all faith and all confidence, because they have prayed for something and they have not got it. I never go to a prayer meeting and stand up at a time like this to say a word, but my memory goes back to that great man, Dr. Pierson, and some of his words on prayer that I happened to hear at Keswick a few years ago—I think

the last time but one on which he was speaking there. I remember how he said, "I want to name to you this morning several levels of prayer." He took, first of all, the lowest level, the level of absolute unbelief, where prayer is utterly unthinkable and unreal. Then he showed us the level of sin in the sense of absolute disobedience, of transgression, where a man is in the enemy's country, and therefore can have no rights as an ambassador in any form or shape to the king of another country—he has not entered into the region where prayer can really avail. To talk to such people about prayer is really to talk to stones. He showed us next the level of bare form. Some people cannot get away from form! We have seen a man sometimes suddenly invited to open a meeting with prayer, asking on all sides for a prayer book, and taking refuge in some well-known collect. I do not depreciate form (nay, I value it), but those who cannot rise above it have never really exercised their privilege of prayer and their duty to "pray always," and it is a natural,

and, I suppose, a spiritual law too, that what you do not use you lose ! Dr. Pierson then gave us the fourth of these low levels, the level of self, where the person just kneels down, as children are sometimes, alas ! taught to do, and says, " O God, bless me, my father and mother, brothers and sisters, relations and friends, and make me a good boy." Well, it is very right and proper to pray for all these people, but it is not the way that our Lord taught us to pray ! He taught us to pray thus : " Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven, give us this day our daily bread." Here you have the right order, and *self* is kept in its right place.

He then took us to the higher levels. First, to the level of spiritual desire, such as Cornelius had when he was feeling out after the unseen and unknown ; then to the level of sonship in Jesus Christ ; then to that level where you plead—and I want to press this rather—" *in the Lord's name.*" How often people forget that

the Lord said, "If ye shall ask anything *in My name*, I will do it." Now anybody who uses my name must have authority for it. And he must have something more: he must be a person that I approve of, and concerning whom I feel sure that when he uses my name he will use it for something I will thoroughly back. And when the Lord gives us the right to use His name, it is on the understanding that we shall ask for what God wants. That cannot fail, it never has failed, it never will fail. If you will ask what God wants, you must know what God has said, and you must have caught the very spirit of the Master; you must desire what God has promised, and believe that you are going to get it. Then he gave us the level where the Spirit intercedes within us "with groanings that cannot be uttered," where we seem to get a premonition of the answer we are going to receive.

Dr. Pierson then brought us to the third division with four levels of answer. First, the level where the man gets what he asks for, in the way he desires, and

at the time he asks, in much the same manner as did Eliezer of Damascus when he went to get a wife for Isaac. Then he showed us the level where the thing asked for is denied, and disguised. He gave as an illustration the Apostle's "thorn." The answer was, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Then he gave us the level where the answer is delayed, and apparently denied for some time, but comes after prevailing prayer. As illustrations of this, he mentioned the woman of Canaan, and also Augustine's mother. Dear people, pray on; depend upon it there are reasons for the delay, but they are reasons of infinite grace and love. The last kind of answer mentioned by Dr. Pierson was where the answer is delayed, and disguised, and denied, where there is no answer and yet you keep on praying, believing that you are dealing with a prayer-hearing God. It seems to me that is our attitude this morning. Why is it that this miracle is here in this hall this morning? We are stretching our hands out (so to speak) into the unseen, we are doing it as we sit

here in our seats, we are looking unto God; we know we are dealing with the Infinite and Eternal and influencing the Real and the Present in a marvellous degree, because we are gathered in His Name; and we see that somehow or other this time is a time of refreshment, and strengthening, and power, and a time that will sweeten the rest of the day, and a time in which, by the way of the Throne, we shall touch the uttermost parts of the earth. I remember how Dr. Pierson gave us, as an illustration of that last class of answers to prayer, the story of that wonderful man of Bristol (Müller), who said he prayed for many years for two friends that he might meet them in heaven; and he told them a few days before he died, "My prayers are not answered yet, but they will be answered—I am absolutely sure of that." Dr. Pierson said, "I can verify the fact that one of them was converted while kneeling round the coffin, and the other a few days after Müller's death."

I bring you a word this morning from

which to start in prayer from Eph. iii. 14: "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family"—all the family, and oh, what a big family it is becoming! we sometimes feel a little bit isolated, but we are not; we are "compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses"—"of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." You find here in this great letter (one of the greatest of all St. Paul's letters) this man on his knees before God, in a gaol, pleading for *all the family*. It is miracle. This man was a sectarian if ever there was one, he was a narrow bigot if ever there was one. But he had got a vision; God had spoken to him, God had communicated to him by the Holy Spirit what he needed to know, and now he was not thinking of the Jew as the aristocrat of the world, he was not thinking of the Gentile as a dog, or of the Greek as an outcast. He was thinking of "all the family." And when that begins to take place, either in Judaism, or in the midst of the Gentile world, or in any one

of our hearts, it is a miracle of God the Holy Ghost. This man had seen a vision, and he was able to say, on one great occasion, "I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision." He was an illustration of Simon Peter's word, on the day of Pentecost, "Your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams, and on my servants and on my handmaidens in those days"—days I believe which are now—"I will pour out my Spirit and they shall prophesy."

I want further to point out two or three things he prayed about. As the Apostle kneels in that gaol, he says, first of all, "I am praying that the eyes of your understanding may be enlightened, and that you may know what is the hope of His calling." We need to pray thus to-day for the Churches. Let the Church lose the Spirit of God and she will become, as it were, a mere carcase. There is no greater stumbling-block to Christ's name to-day than what we call Christendom! There is no greater set-back to our ministry than the Church itself. One

of the things she has lost is the hope of her calling. The great hope of her calling is *the hope of His coming*. I delight in the thought that when the Lord spoke of "men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things that are coming upon the earth," He said to His Church—the little body of disciples—that will be the very time for you to "look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh." I feel we want that attitude now. I think we live in grave times, we live in a time when the faculty of wonder is almost being lost. In my younger days I used to wonder how ever a lot of wonderful things could happen about the time of our Lord's return and people would not notice them much. Those were the days before electricity and tramcars and wireless telegraphy and a thousand other things. But now I see how most extraordinary events can happen and the faculty of wonder be absent. We get surfeited, and overcharged, and preoccupied to such an extent as not to notice that the very things are happening that

are calculated to quicken the hope of the believer.

I want also specially to speak of hope with reference to the subject (Foreign Missions) for which we meet to pray this morning. What is our hope? I sometimes think we Christians make a great mistake when we speak of "the knowledge of the Lord covering the earth as the waters cover the sea," without adequately guarding our statements, so that Hiram Maxims, and some other maxims, come to us and say, "You are under a delusion; you imagine you are converting the world. We know something different." What is our hope in this matter? It is based on our Lord's command—to bear witness, and on His promise that He would gather through our testimony "a people for His Name." Here is no promise of the conversion of the world in this age. But it is a promise of a multitude gathered out of all nations unto Him. I am not going to lose my hope if China becomes materialistic or if Japan refuses Christ! Our work is to bear adequate witness. That

is being done, and any reflection upon the way it is being done only reflects upon you and me, and challenges us to do it better ! I have been in many of the countries of the world, and have never come across a man or woman who has seen a clear-cut witness to Jesus Christ and has not wanted to be introduced to him. The only trouble is that our witness is so casual, so uncertain, and often so untrue ! But where there are Missionary Societies that we have learned to trust and love, where there are men and women sent out full of the Holy Ghost, and believing God's Word, and living it, that "gathering out" is taking place, the Lord is seeing "of the travail of His soul." Therefore, *be full of hope* ! "Now the God of hope fill you with joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope."

One other word. In the same early part of the letter the Apostle prays, "That ye may know . . . what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He

wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." *Power.* Here is the Pentecostal endowment of the Church, and so long as the Church—speaking in the widest sense—used that endowment for world-witness, all went right, the Church was sweet, strong, pure. But the moment the Church began to use the endowment for purposes of spiritual pride, and domination, and centralisation, and began to forget her witness to the circumference, things went wrong, the power failed. At the Edinburgh Missionary Conference I was sitting by a friend, and as I looked at the scene I said to him, "This scene surely was unthinkable a century ago." "My dear friend, it was impossible," he said, "ten years ago." Some degree of obedience is bringing back some degree of power, just as some degree of disobedience led to loss of power. Some

degree of obedience to-day is bringing back spiritual force. As Dr. John Mott says: "Dynamics that will touch the uttermost parts of the earth are the very dynamics that we need for the gutters and the masses now!" A Bishop warned us at the recent Church Congress that last summer, when labour and capital were so seriously pitted against each other, and the military had to be called out, the Church did not seem to have the grip she should have had. It is the Church's own fault, and she will regain that power only in the degree in which she fulfils the Master's world-wide purpose.

'The people to be gathered out for the kingdom are not to be found only in England, but in all lands, and you have got to put an adequate witness in those lands.

You must think not of a millennium to take place before Christ comes, but of things possibly growing darker and darker. You have, however, got to hope for a great "gathering out" that must progressively go on till the very

end ! The angels know where those people are at "the four winds," and when the Lord is going to come, His angels will go to those very four winds ! Let us not leave those four winds out of our purview. For He has thus foreshadowed the scope of service for Him "till He come" ! And only as we work on *His* lines shall we receive His power.

HOME-LIFE AND THE NATION.

HOME-LIFE AND THE NATION.

By the Rev. H. L. C. V. de CANDOLE, M.A.

(Vicar of Clifton, Bristol).

I THINK, perhaps, we shall do best, in selecting one of the many subjects that are suggested for us to-day, if I limit myself to speaking on some aspects of our home life. And I would make, as the ground-work of my remarks, those words of St. Paul where he writes about the Christian Home, in Eph. v., and Col. iii. and iv. : "Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. Children obey your parents in all things : for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. Fathers, be not harsh to your children, lest they be discouraged.

Servants, obey your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ. Masters, give to your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven."

That is the Christian picture of true home life. Some of you will remember that about eighteen months ago our gracious King, in some of those words which are indeed words of wisdom, and which we thank God so constantly for from his lips, said this—he was speaking in answer to a deputation from the York Convocation — "The foundations of national glory are set in the homes of our people. They will only remain unshaken while the family life of our nation and race is strong, simple, and pure." It is for that that we gather to pray to-day, and we shall do well, I think, if we let our prayers run along the lines of St. Paul's thoughts in those two epistles, when he sets before us the ideal of a Christian home, the creation of which has been called "the masterpiece of the applied Gospel."

Notice, first, in St. Paul's teaching, what it is that he lays down as the basis of a true home life. It is remarkable, in all the advice that he gives here, how he lays stress not upon rights but upon duties, and how he puts it to every member of the home to regard, first of all, not his own rights in the home, but his duties towards the other members of the home. If he writes to the husband he says nothing of authority, but, "Love your wives." If he speaks to the wives he says nothing about their right to a "concurrent equality" with their husbands, but he bids them both be lovers still, and go often back to the day when "the two swear at the shrine of Christ a deathless love." If he speaks to children he bids them obey their parents, and makes no exceptions, although exceptions were doubtless bound to arise. If he speaks to parents in relation to their children, he bids them not be harsh towards them. If he speaks to masters, he bids them remember the rights of the slaves; and if he speaks to slaves, he bids them remember the rights of the

masters, and not their own. In other words, you see that the basis of the Christian home lies in a sense of the mutual responsibility of the one to the other ; and if we are to pray aright for our home life in our own dear land, we shall need, first of all, to pray that there may be a quickening or, we might almost say, a revival of the sense of mutual responsibility in the home. If you have read that suggestive book, published last autumn, called, "Facing the Facts," you will remember the gloomy picture given by one of the writers of our English home life. He observes : "The outstanding feature of the moral life of to-day is the shirking of responsibility, the worst example of which is in the home." Then he speaks of the alarming increase in the number of divorces, and the declining birth-rate, and he adds : "Parents have no sense of responsibility to their children ; they let them do what they like. And on the testimony of one of the best of our chief constables the appalling immorality of our cities is due to the utter lack of

parental control." It is a dark picture and very unlike the beautiful picture St. Paul sketches of the early Christians living in difficult times, lives such as made at any rate one onlooker say that it was from those homes that there flowed forth the beauty that was in the world.

We might look at this from another point of view. Living, as I have been now for ten years, in Cambridge, and coming in contact from day to day with young life in one aspect or another, what has made one sad again and again has been the drift, for one reason or another, from the old ideals of the Christian home. When I have tried to ask myself what has been the cause of the drift, it has been in large measure, I think, owing to (shall I say ?) an overlooking on the part of many Christian parents of this sense of mutual responsibility, especially in certain directions.

For instance, take the intellectual drift of to-day. When our young men and women come into contact with certain currents of thought, they are confused and hurt. Often and often I have been

privileged to speak with them over some of the present-day difficulties of faith, and the saddest thing about that conversation has so often been this : the feeling that their parents would not sympathise with them in their difficulties. Or take the drift into worldliness, the longing for excitement that characterises all classes of our people, the longing for some outlet from the usual routine of life. I have watched one and another, and when I have come to close quarters with them, it has nearly always come to this : that there has been a want of sympathy between parent and child ; the restraining influence has in some cases been too strong ; there has been want of sympathy, and what I believe is perhaps at the root of the whole matter, a want of cultivation in their children of such tastes as would lead to an immediate recoil from any recreation or amusement that is not good, and pure, and wholesome. What I mean is expressed very well in one of our petitions to-day, "That fathers and mothers may be the companions of their children." We

thank God for the noble way in which many parents are sacrificing themselves in regard to things that have to do with their children's temporal welfare. But what I would plead for is that there should be an increasing sense of responsibility among Christian parents for sharing with their children their intellectual difficulties. There *are* intellectual difficulties, there *are* problems of faith, and who but the parent should be the guide and counsellor of the child as he goes forth to face currents of thought which do not meet him while he is still in the home? If this is to be so, we must go back to St. Paul's great thought and ideal of mutual responsibility of the one to the other, the sharing of one another's burdens, the desire to understand one another's points of view, with which alone there will come the power to lead sympathetically and wisely those who are in danger of being led astray, either by wrong currents of thought, or by the increasing pleasure and worldliness of to-day.

What is the power to which St. Paul

points us, if such an ideal as this is to be reached? Have you noticed how in both these Epistles (Eph. and Col.) St. Paul's plea for the Christian homes comes at the end of a statement of those great truths which made the Apostle the man that he was? Take this Epistle to the Colossians. In the first chapter he speaks of the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ ; he sweeps aside all other teachers and agencies, and says there is no room for one of them, for " Christ is all and in all," for " in all things He must have the pre-eminence." When he has thus set forth the greatness of Jesus Christ, and has led his hearers past all other teachers and influences of one kind and another, he takes them in the second chapter to the Cross of Jesus Christ, and speaks of the wonderful love which there met and satisfied the needs of sinful men. In the third chapter he leads us to the open grave and shows us this same Jesus Christ pre-eminent, not only on earth but in heaven, when He came forth as the triumphant conqueror over death, in order that He might live His own risen

life in the heart and experience of the individual believer. Then at the last he comes down to the home and says, "There is the place to prove it." In other words, I think that what St. Paul would say to us about all this home life of ours is that what we need is a revival of devotion to the person and to the work of Jesus Christ. In Him we find "the unifying influence of a great Personality." With a fresh love of His name, known and honoured everywhere, there would come back to the Church that wonderful influence which she exerted in those first years when the heathen stood by and marvelled at the beautiful home life of Christian people. In this way there would be re-created that which is, after all, the one influence which really tells in life, I mean the influence of the home.

How is it to be secured? St. Paul would answer that question by telling us to cultivate in our homes the things that lead to a love of the Lord Jesus Christ. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church." Bring

that great pre-eminent example of self-sacrifice into your homes and love one another as Christ has loved you. In other words, we must foster in our homes the things which will lead our boys and girls to love Him who first loved them. We must come back to the old-fashioned things, family prayers, observance of Sunday, that day when God's gate is opened wide, and His hand is stretched out with blessings, that day which is still in many Christian homes the happiest day by far in all the week. How often one hears of parents who have forsaken the habit of reading the Bible with their children, because, they say, "things are so uncertain." Let us read God's Word together and cultivate thought upon it one with the other, and then there will come light on those difficult problems which our children are bound to face as they go through life. But, above all, let us believe in the personal influence of the Christian parent. It is that which will be the guiding star through life of those who, faced with difficulties and temptations, and casting about for a

haven of rest, will find it in the recollection of the old home where was purity, and love, and goodness, and the things that made for peace. So let us pray for our homes, that there may be a re-establishment in our country of this beautiful ideal of home life which St. Paul gives us in his Epistles, the building up of that life where the foundations of national glory alone are set, and where they can only remain unshaken while this ideal remains that St. Paul has taught us. Someone has said, "God has given us three great institutions—the Church, the School, the Home; but the greatest of these is the Home."

“CAN THESE BONES LIVE?”

“CAN THESE BONES LIVE?”

By the Rev. F. L. DENMAN, M.A.

(Secretary of the London Society for promoting Christianity amongst the Jews).

ONE is always most thankful that Missions to the Jews, more than perhaps any other Missions, centre round and in the Word of God. If we want to know anything about the Jews from God's point of view, we are forced to look to His own Word. Twenty years ago, when I was called to work amongst the Jews in London, their condition was then practically the same as it had been for some eighteen centuries. They were still “dry bones,” in the “open valley,” lying scattered for all men to see. Two years after that there came a change. The Zionist movement began, which caused the Jews to look to Palestine, and as Dr. Herzl, the great leader of that movement, said, “We are no longer

scattered units, we are once more a nation, and Zionism has brought this to pass." That was his confirmation of the words of Scripture which tells us that as we preached the Word to the Jews so the "dry bones" would come together, "bone to his bone." That has confessedly already taken place. Those "bones" were to have sinews on them, that is power, and the Jews are once more a people with whom the nations have to reckon, in spiritual as well as in temporal things. Almost every Government has to recognise that fact. This growing influence will become more and more apparent and, I take it, will hereafter be the means of causing all nations to come up against Jerusalem to battle, for when "Jeshurun waxes fat," we are told, "he kicks." "But there was no breath in them," the prophet says. Then came the time when such movements as we are gathered to-day to support began to be more widely adopted. The spirit of prayer has been aroused not only in our own land but in all lands. Even in China and Japan,

where the native Christians find great inspiration from the Scriptures, which foretold what was now taking place in Jewry, prayer is going up on behalf of the Jews. Ezekiel xxxvii. 9 bids us to pray that the Holy Spirit might breathe upon these slain, and that as a result they would stand on their feet and live. We are also told that they would become an exceeding great army. Let us not forget that in God's sight the Jews are “an exceeding great army.” God has a purpose in every army, and we want to see that army of Jews on the Lord's side, fighting the battles of the King of kings.

Further, as a result of prayer and preaching, life was to come into the dry bones once more united. And what is the first thing that tells us that a newly-born child has life? Is not it that it begins to cry? And to-day we see that the whole house of Israel has begun to cry. Is there a single Jewish gathering of any account that does not lament the defection from their ranks and the lack of spirituality in their worship?

Judaism does not appeal to the nation to-day. In an orthodox Jewish paper, last month, in London, a Jew writes : " Our orthodox friends cannot reclaim the lost—those who have gone away from us altogether ; they cannot bring back the many hundreds of Jews who are the mainstay of ethical societies. They are not likely to reclaim the multitude of Jews and Jewesses who are regular worshippers at well known churches and chapels, and they certainly cannot persuade the young Jews and Jewesses who have been converted to Christianity, week by week, not by the miserable conversionists, but by the attraction of a spirituality in public worship that they have been unable to gain from the synagogue." What is that but the foretold cry, " Our bones are dried, our hope is lost : we are cut off for our parts ? " What is that but the vanguard of the universal cry that will go up from the whole nation one day, as they realize that Judaism has nothing for them, and that Christianity is the one glorious faith that the whole world must bend before and

absorb? There is no doubt that God is working amongst the Jews by His Spirit, and when God is working you and I must be in line with Him, seeking to know what His will is for ourselves and, through us, for blessing upon His own people Israel. We must remember that the Jews are going to be a blessing to the world, and you and I must be up and doing to hasten that day. It matters not whether it will be in our life or not. If we are faithful in our day of opportunity, we shall have the reward with those who help these things to come to pass in their own day.

What is taking place? In Warsaw there are days when the missionaries cannot possibly see all the Jews that come to them to enquire about Christ. There is a feeling that the old days of Judaism have gone by, and the younger generation will never stand in the same place as their forefathers have done. You hear of such things in the papers as Jews gathering together to reconsider the trial of our Lord, and their verdict is that He was innocent. You hear, too,

all kinds of Jews speaking of our Lord in terms of the greatest respect. One great Jewish authority speaks of Him as "The Divine son of man," another describes Him as "One of the greatest of men," another refers to Him thus, "The crown of thorns on His head makes Him only the more our brother, for to this day it is borne by His people." A great Jewish philanthropist says, "We honour and revere Jesus of Nazareth as we do our own prophets." But as long as they stop short of the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, their utterances are insufficient; nevertheless they are signs pointing to this: that the Jewish heart is being turned to the Lord, and "when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away." I suppose you could not meet with any educated Jew to-day who has not thought about Jesus Christ, and had Him in his heart as one whom he can look up to as the greatest Jew that ever lived. The Jewish nation is proud of Jesus Christ; they would never cry out to-day, as they did of old, "Crucify Him!" they even say that His cruci-

fixion was the greatest human tragedy that ever took place in the world. We can never, however, be content until the Jew gets right up to the Cross, and it is our prayers that will help to bring that about.

Another sign of the times is seen in that conference of Rabbis, last summer, when they sent round notices to all missionary societies and to all the Bishops of the Church of England, calling upon them to do what they could to put a stop to Jewish missionary work. In their own papers they had, as a result, to say this: "The conversionists will go on converting, and converts will go on being converted." And again, "If a man attaches himself in all sincerity to another faith, of the superiority of which he is positively convinced, then, apart from the personal pain which his defection must give to his family, I see no reason nor excuse for holding him back." That is a wonderful confession to come from a Jew, and to be printed in the chief Jewish paper in England. It shows that our prayers are being an-

swered, and we know that as we pray in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ our prayer is not in vain. The first part of Ezekiel xxxvii. has proved this during the last twenty years. I think we who are here to pray for the peace of Jerusalem have got the proudest position of any people in the world to-day. That object is in the very heart of our Lord Jesus Christ. Go on praying and watching for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and when He comes have some Jewish soul to bring to Him. I remember the late Mr. George Macgregor saying to a friend of mine: "God alone can save a soul, but God does not will to save a soul alone." All joy must come from our Lord Jesus Christ, but do not you think that Abraham and Isaac and Jacob will have some word of thanksgiving to give to you and me as they know that we have done something to bring their fallen descendants back to Jesus Christ? Let us realize that we have not been sent into this world just to pray for ourselves and work out our own salvation in the power of God's Holy Spirit.

We are not meant to meet our Lord in the air alone ; we are meant to bring someone with us. Let us pray and work that we may hasten the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together unto Him, when Jew and Gentile shall kneel before Him and thank Him for His precious blood which has redeemed us from all iniquity and made us a people zealous of good works to the glory of His great Name.

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